

VZCZCXRO0254  
PP RUEHROV  
DE RUEHDS #1641 1661357  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 151357Z JUN 06  
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA  
TO RUCNIAD/IGAD COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
INFO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1133

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 001641

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR AF DAS YAMAMOTO AND AF/E  
USUN NY FOR T.OHLSON  
LONDON, PARIS, ROME FOR AFRICA WATCHER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/15/2016

TAGS: PREL PBTS MOPS KPKO ET ER

SUBJECT: ETHIOPIA: UNMEE SAYS ETHIOPIA IN COMPLIANCE WITH  
UNSCR 1640

REF: IIR 6 830 0162 06

Classified By: CHARGE VICKI HUDDLESTON FOR REASONS 1.4 (B,D)

¶1. (C) Summary: According to the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), Ethiopia remains in compliance with UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1640. UNMEE is more concerned about Eritrean activities than continued Ethiopian troop movements and training. A Defense Attaché contact provided an update on Ethiopia/Eritrea border dispute issues from the UNMEE perspective. The contact told DATT that the force commander still considers Ethiopia to be in compliance with UNSCR 1640. In fact, the contact stated the International Crisis Group said Ethiopia had exceeded compliance by withdrawing one additional division in December 2005 than it was required. (Note: According to DATT, Ethiopia pulled back seven divisions. End Note.) The contact said according to the UNMEE G2, compliance did not mean moving troops a fixed distance back, but rather that the location of Ethiopian forces in the border area returned to the situation of December 2004. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) Note: This cable is derived from a DATT IIR (reftel).

¶3. (C) The contact added that even with the shift of the Ethiopian National Defense Force's (ENDF) 29th Motorized Infantry Division in May 2006 back to Adi Nebrid, Ethiopia remained in compliance. He commented the situation in Ethiopia remains calm and stable along the border. The UNMEE Force Commander reportedly met twice in May with MG Yohannes Gebremeskel, Head of Intelligence, Main Department of the ENDF and Ethiopian Commissioner for the Military Cooperation Committee (MCC) and did not lodge any complaints.

¶4. (C) DATT contact stated ironically on May 31 that MG Yohannes contacted UNMEE requesting if UNMEE had any information about Eritrean activity in the TSZ. The contact said UNMEE remains concerned about Eritrean Defense Force (EDF) activity, as the Force Commander believes increased Eritrean government restrictions on the movement of diplomatic personnel in Eritrea may signal Eritrean deployments.

¶5. (C) The contact said a Russian officer assigned to UNMEE reported the EDF has a S-200 (SA-5) unit, presumably a battery between Asmara and Zela Ambessa. According to the Russian officer, the "200" refers to the range of the missile. The officer was surprised Russia would sell such a weapon system to Eritrea. The contact said this system is problematic in mountainous terrain, as the warhead has no radar, and the missile relies on constant radar illumination of the target by ground radar. It is easy for aircraft to break illumination by moving lower to the ground. The

contact commented this would make the aircraft susceptible to attack by other air defense systems, primarily anti-aircraft guns.

¶6. (C) Discussion returned to Ethiopian military activity. The contact said the artillery regiment from the 21st Division had reinforced the 11th Division around Zela Ambessa. Other artillery regiments from second-echelon divisions in northern and central regions had also moved forward. The contact commented UNMEE believes the intent of these movements is to put pressure on Eritrea concerning to conform with directives of the Ethiopia-Eritrea Boundary Commission (EEBC) and to deter Eritrean offensive action before the rainy season.

HUDDLESTON